

REMARKS

I. Introduction.

Claims 1-14 are pending, and stand rejected. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, first paragraph. Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, second paragraph. Various groups of claims in the group of Claims 1-14 were subjected to separate rejections under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b).

II. The 35 U.S.C. Section 112 Rejections.

A. The Section 112, First Paragraph Rejection.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, first paragraph. The Office Action states that virtually any absorbent material would meet the absorbent gelling material limitation of the present claims.

Claim 1 has been amended to address the 35 U.S.C. Section 112, first paragraph rejection. The Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 1 be reconsidered and withdrawn. Not all absorbent materials are water-swellaable and capable of forming a gel when contacted by moisture. The term "absorbent gelling material" is a well-known term used in certain fields, particularly in disposable absorbent articles, such as in the case of disposable diapers.

B. The Section 112, Second Paragraph Rejection.

The phrase in Claim 11 that was said to render that claim indefinite has been deleted. The Applicants expressly do not admit, however, that the basis for this rejection was proper. Claims 7 and 12 have been amended to address similar issues.

III. The 35 U.S.C. Section 102 Rejections.

A. Levitt Reference.

Claims 1, 3-7, 9-11, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,326,344 issued to Levitt.

The Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn. The acrylic copolymer used in the composition described in the Levitt reference is used as an emulsifier, and according to Column 4, lines 10-12 of the Levitt reference, is water soluble. The Levitt reference does not teach or disclose a process for